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C O N F I D E N T I A L JERUSALEM 001905

SIPDIS

NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE. NSC FOR ABRAMS/RAMCHAND/PASCUAL

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TAGS: [KWBG](#) [PBTS](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [IS](#)  
SUBJECT: FIRST RESIDENTS MOVE INTO ISRAELI SETTLEMENT OF  
NOF ZION IN EAST JERUSALEM'S JABAL MUKABBIR

REF: A. JERUSALEM 01539  
[1](#)B. 2006 JERUSALEM 6301519

Classified By: Consul General Jake Walles, per reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. PolOffs visited the settlement of Nof Zion (View of Zion) in the Jabal Mukabbir neighborhood of East Jerusalem, where the first 50 of 100 apartment owners have moved in, and an additional 400 units will be constructed in the next few years. Palestinians from Jabal Mukabbir told PolOff Nof Zion is built on privately-owned Palestinian land and anticipated problems between the new residents and Jabal Mukabbir residents. End summary.

NOF ZION SETTLEMENT GROWING IN JABAL MUKABBIR  
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[1](#)2. (C) Nofei Israel CEO Hanoch Kas October 16 showed PolOffs progress on the "private luxurious neighborhood" of Nof Zion in the East Jerusalem neighborhood of Jabal Mukabbir. Kas said all 100 units in the two finished buildings have been sold, and 50 are inhabited. He said 400 more units are scheduled for construction in the next two to three years, in addition to a luxury hotel, synagogue, shopping center, country club, and an "International Sephardic Center."

[1](#)3. (C) Kas said most of the existing 100 units were purchased sight unseen by AmCits attracted by an advertising campaign launched by Nof Zion from its New York City office that emphasized the excellent panoramic view of Jerusalem's Old City. Kas admitted that the new residents were "surprised" upon arrival that their apartments were located in a Palestinian neighborhood, but said "they got over it." He said the 400 planned units will include luxury and more affordable housing.

[1](#)4. (C) Kas told PolOffs that Nof Zion's architect, Yehuda Levy, legally inherited the land from his parents. He said Levy intends to purchase individually-owned Arab residences adjacent to the development to "clear the area." He claimed Palestinian residents of Jabal Mukabbir are content with the construction, because it has provided sidewalks, improved plumbing and outdoor lighting.

PALESTINIAN RESIDENTS DISPUTE CLAIM TO LAND  
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[1](#)5. (C) Muhammad Hamdan, a Palestinian resident of Jabal Mukabbir told PolOff that Nof Zion is built on Palestinian-owned land. He said residents of the area are not happy with the new settlement, in spite of improved streets and lighting, because they believe that, "once the settlers come, there will be problems." He said Israeli construction in East Jerusalem has already increased tension in the city, and Jabal Mukabbir does not want to be part of it. Another Jabal Mukabbir resident Hussein Obayadat told PolOff that part of Nof Zion is built on land belonging to

his family, but said he did not believe he could recover the land in an Israeli court.

WALLES